

THE BLACK PAPER

VOLUME 1 | 2024

An exploration of black success, wealth and education amongst people of African descent throughout the world.

As human beings, it is part of our nature to want to succeed. We have an inherent drive to win in every aspect of our lives, whether as young students in school or as adults in our careers. We want to be seen as winners in our communities, families, cultural norms, and even by those we consider as our adversaries. Throughout history, there have been countless tales of the winners - those who have triumphed over obstacles and achieved greatness. These winners are remembered for their ability to break barriers, achieve the unthinkable, emerge stronger, and become more influential with greater resources. So, what does history say about the winners and losers of society? Who are the winners and who are the losers.

"Whoever controls the images, controls your self-esteem, self-respect, and self-development. Who controls the history, controls the vision."

Doctor Leonard Jeffries

Purpose of the black paper

The purpose of this black paper is for the black collective to explore what we have to say about success as well as how we see, and view ourselves.

Are we winning or are we losing?

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MISSION:

To guide BIPOC businesses, professionals, organizations and leaders to solutions that drive global innovation, responsible growth, sustainable success

VISION:

To see a BIPOC global marketplace that slims the gap of disparities and inequalities for people of African descent.

STRATEGY

Qualitative Research with a sample size of 120 respondents of African descent.

*Research facilitated and delivered by ENC Solutions
www. enc.solutions*

Message to Reader

Dear Reader,

I am excited to present this comprehensive series of case studies, we at ENC Solutions call, "the Black Paper." This journal comes in response to a growing need to understand, develop, and organize insights for the modern-day black business professional in our modern-day world.

ENC Solutions is blessed with the opportunity of over 10 years to address the strategic business challenges and objectives of Black-owned businesses, black leaders, and black



Jemeka Jeshunda

professionals. **ENC Solutions values the collective narrative of past, present, and future on what it means to lead professionals in a global marketplace.** As a result, ENC Solutions has a deep understanding of black-owned businesses, black leaders', and black professionals' aspirations and pain points. As a black woman-owned consulting management firm, I am enthusiastic about our continual contribution to black success by leveraging new ways and approaches in, "the Black Paper," the first of its kind. This journal aims to give the black business community information that will aid in their decision making for mindful blowing results and astronomical gains. Thank you for reading Volume 1 of the Black Paper.

Sincerely,

Jemeka Jeshunda

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Our Proud ENC Contributors

This black paper would not be, without the tireless work of the ENC Black Paper Team.



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Temeka is a proud ENC contributor for the Black Paper.

As the Principal Consultant and Founder of Effective New Creative (ENC) Solutions, she is a strong proponent for root cause orientation, helping organizations and business leaders gain the clarity they need, to arrive at sustainable strategies.

A proud Memphis Tiger, Temeka studied Economics, at the University of Memphis where she also received her Master's of Business Administration.

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Tolulope is a proud ENC contributor for the Black Paper. He is an astute administrator, and scientist with a profound appreciation for interdisciplinary approaches blending education, business development and psychology innovately. Through his experience, he's consistently sought to deepen his understanding of leaders, communities, institutions and organizations, through the sciences, education, research and business development.

He currently holds masters degrees in Industrial Chemistry, Environmental Chemistry, and Educational Psychology. He studies at the University of Memphis (P.h.D. Chemistry in view).

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Abdullahi Olaniyan



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Abdullahi is a proud ENC contributor for the Black Paper. As a dedicated remote executive assistant and administrator, Abdullahi has a passion for efficient task management and organization. With a background in providing remote support, he specializes in streamlining processes, enhancing productivity and ensuring smooth operations. Abdullahi brings a proactive approach to assisting organizations and their leaders, allowing them to focus on their core functions.

His academic roots are in Physics education at Adekunle Ajasin University (Nigeria).

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Bronten Stanley



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Bronten is a proud ENC contributor for the Black Paper.

As an architect of ideation, strategy and branding, Bronten has a passion for seeing mathematical connections that unveil a deeper understanding of the world at large.

An avid chess player, Bronten loves to teach and educate others on how to achieve best case scenarios / outcomes through math language, and chess. He looks to study architecture. He is also a digital artist as an inductee of the 2023 Teen Arts Festival (Memphis, TN) and the 2024 Memphis Hope Art Exhibition (WKNO of PBS).

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We did a survey

In a small sample size of 120 individuals of African descent spread throughout Africa, Europe, and North America respectively, ENC Solutions wanted to see what, blacks had to say about themselves because according to some data points, individuals of African descent have lost a lot; and have yet to make inter-generational gains compared to other ethnic counterparts.

What did other data points have to say?

In a Brookings institute study, **African Americans make up 13.4% of the US population but only 4% of the nation's household wealth** compared to **Caucasian Americans who make up 60% of the US population but make up 84% of the nation's household wealth.**

In a Reuters study, compared to their Caucasian counterparts, **African Americans merely hold 17 cents of wealth to every \$1 of Caucasian Americans.**

Furthermore, a 2019 survey by the Federal Reserve Board, **white families have the highest level of both median and mean family wealth: \$188,200 and \$983,400, respectively.** Black families have considerably less wealth than white families. **black families' median and mean wealth is less than that of white families, at \$24,100 and \$142,500, respectively.**

"Africa is home to some 30 percent of the world's mineral reserves, eight percent of the world's natural Gas, and 12 percent of the world's oil reserves. The continent has 40% of the world's gold and up to 90% of its chromium and platinum."

-United Nations Environment Programme

According to the World Data Lab, roughly **29% of Africa's inhabitants live in extreme poverty.**

While, people of **African descent make up at least 20% of the world population, they only make up less than 1% of all billionaires** worldwide (total of 15 as of February 18, 2022)

Why this Exploration Matters



Data and the longstanding implications of colonialism and slavery of African indigenous people, impose a real reality of inequality and disparity of blacks. Again, this exploration wants to examine what we have to say about ourselves and how we narrate ourselves to ourselves. Our self-image, our ability to see ourselves as capable and triumphant greatly impacts our ability to narrow the gap between losing and winning, and so many disparities that other data sets and research imply. If we see ourselves correctly, we can envision solutions effectively.

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How to use the black paper

This black paper is not a definitive; yet, a tool for each person's individual as well as collective exploration. For leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals, when reading this black paper, start by understanding the context and background, especially in the professional climate you're currently in. **Identify** the main issues or challenges presented. **Examine** the provided data and draw connections to the issues. **Consider** alternative solutions and their potential outcomes.

"It is better to be part of a large whole than the whole of a small part" - Fredrick Douglas

Finally, draw **conclusions** and **lessons** learned.

We encourage you to use the black paper as a learning tool to enhance problem-solving skills and strategic thinking in real-world scenarios for yourself, your team, your organization, and your community at large.

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Freedom

Definition

- **1**
- : the quality or state of being free: such as
- **a**
- : the absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice or action
- **b**
- : liberation from slavery or restraint or the power of another: INDEPENDENCE
- **c**
- : the quality or state of being exempt or released usually from something onerous
- // *freedom* from care
- **d**
- : Unrestricted use
- // gave him the *freedom* of their home
- **e**
- : EASE, FACILITY
- // spoke the language with freedom
- **f**
- : the quality of being frank, open, or outspoken
- // answered with *freedom*
- **g**
- : improper familiarity
- **h**
- : boldness of conception or execution
- **2**
- **a**
- : a political right
- **b**
- : FRANCHISE, PRIVILEGE

Synonyms & Antonyms

Synonyms

autonomy, independence, independence, liberty, self-determination, self-governance, self-government, sovereignty(also sovranity)

Antonyms

dependence (also dependence), heteronomy, subjection, unfreedom

EDUCATION

A sample size of 120 participants. here are the key findings about what respondents had to say about education **with the top three highest responses.**



People will respect me if I am college educated:

Strongly Disagree: 45%

Somewhat Disagree: 20%

Somewhat Agree: 20%

More than 60% of survey participants believe that their education does not measure how much people respect them.



The more degrees I have, the more I can secure my career success:

Strongly Disagree: 37%

Somewhat Disagree: 23%

Somewhat Agree: 21%

More than 60% of survey participants believe that more formal education does not secure career success.

More than 70% of participants have a bachelor's degree or higher.



Educational Demographics Breakdown

Highest Level of

Education by

Respondents

High School or Less 1%

High School 27%

Bachelor's Degree 45%

Masters Degree 21%

Doctorate Degree 5%

SUCCESS & OPPORTUNITY

A sample size of 120 participants. here are the key findings about what respondents had to say about success and opportunity **with the top three highest responses.**

- **I believe I can make it anywhere in the world:**

Strongly agree: 54%

Somewhat agree: 31%

- **My ethnicity has no implications on my success:**

Strongly agree 43%

Somewhat disagree: 22%

Strongly Disagree: 14%

- **Africa is a place of wealth & opportunity:**

Strongly agree: 62%

Somewhat agree: 18%

Neither agree nor disagree: 17%

- **I believe I can achieve success in the country I was born in:**

Strongly agree: 70%

Somewhat agree: 22%

Neither agree nor disagree: 6%

The most determining factor for success:

1. Mental Tenacity (Mindset) 46%
2. Relationships (Whom you Know) 22%
3. Hard Work (Will) 17%

Mental toughness and relationships make up 78% of the survey participants' core determining factor of success.

"Now I've been free, I know what a dreadful condition slavery is. I have seen hundreds of escaped slaves, but I never saw one who was willing to go back and be a slave."

- Harriet Tubman

THE NUMBER ONE SIGN OF SUCCESS?

My Freedom 55%

My Integrity 21%

My Family 15%

Freedom and Integrity make up over 75% of what success looks like for survey respondents.

CAREER, NETWORKING, POLICY

A sample size of 120 participants. here are the key findings about what respondents had to say about career, networking, and policy **with the top three highest responses.**



For the best career opportunities, networking with non-blacks is the best-case scenario:

Strongly Disagree: 31%

Neither agree nor disagree: 26%

Somewhat agree: 21%



I believe my next best career opportunity can come from a person of color:

Strongly agree: 32%

Neither agree nor disagree: 30%

Somewhat agree: 24%



The best business practices, policies, and procedures come from non-African countries only:

Neither or disagree: 35%

Strongly disagree: 33%

Somewhat disagree: 19%

Exploration Time:

How do you connect with those of African Descent?

Do you see networking with each other as an opportunity for you to achieve your personal and professional goals?

How do we define and/or identify corrupt practices or systems?

What is the ethical standard you use to establish practices, policies and procedures?

More than 50% of survey participants suggest that non-African countries do not have the best business practices, policies, and procedures.

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Demographics

• Native Continent

North America: 57%

Africa: 41%

Europe: 2%

South America: < 1%

• Age

Under 30 30%

31 to 39 39%

40 to 49 19%

50 to 59 8%

60 and up 3%

• Type of Employment

Full-Time Employee 46%

Part-Time Employee 9%

Self-Employed/Business Owner 25%

Student 13%

Retired 1%

Unemployed 5%

Conclusion

This black paper offers insights to suggest the opportunities that lie ahead of us not behind us.

Though the strides are big, the hope that what is needed to achieve and win is beyond the challenges we face; yet, the aptitude to think critically and think of solutions to narrow the gap versus widen it. Despite all that history has said we've been through and where we stand, the most prolific findings from this black paper hold the power of agreement: our belief and the ability to collectively work together.

IF WE OWN THE INFORMATION, THEN WE OWN ACCESS TO THE DECISIONS.

WHEN WE DECIDE, THE STRATEGY, AND THE SOLUTIONS WILL APPEAR.



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Why Choose Us?

ENC Solutions is made up of almost 10 years of seasoned consultancy experience bringing a wealth of expertise to the table. We successfully work with Black-owned small businesses, helping them navigate complexities and achieve sustainable growth. With a client-centric mindset, we are committed to collaborating closely with Black-owned small businesses and their team every step of the way. 95% of ENC Solutions business consists of serving Black-owned small businesses.